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C O N F I D E N T I A L BAGHDAD 003350

SIPDIS

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [IZ](#)

SUBJECT: MUTHANNA: LEADING SHEIKH OFFERS TO ORGANIZE SHI,A
AND SUNNI LEADERS IN FAVOR OF SOFA

REF: BAGHDAD 3192

Classified By: PRT Muthanna Team Leader Brad Lynch for reasons 1.4 (b)
and (d).

This is a PRT Muthanna reporting cable.

[¶1.](#) (C) On October 11 Muthanna-based Sheikh Abu Chefat reaffirmed his desire to see the SOFA approved by the Iraqi government and offered to mobilize his tribal colleagues to build support for the agreement. Chefat,s discussion with PRT leader took place in the context of follow-up to a September meeting in Baghdad with Senior Advisor Gordon Gray, to which Chefat had led a delegation of seven Muthanna sheikhs (reftel).

[¶2.](#) (C) Chefat reiterated his support for the SOFA, suggesting a new strategy for approaching the central government. Chefat believes that the GOI covets tribal support and could easily be influenced by a broad-based lobbying effort by tribal leaders in favor of the agreement. It is noteworthy that he claims to be able to unite tribal leaders and educators from Shi,a and Sunni regions in a coordinated lobby effort. The geographical regions that he mentioned include: Dhi Qar, Maysan, Diwaniyah, Muthanna, Najaf, Karbala, Diyala, Anbar, and the Sunni sector of south Baghdad.

[¶3.](#) (C) Comment: Sheikh Chefat,s SOFA support is genuine and typical of the nationalist movement we see among Muthanna,s tribal leadership. It is far from clear that Chefat could deliver on promises of a cross-sectarian tribal coalition in favor of the SOFA, given his difficulties in organizing sheikhs along similar lines for purposes of the provincial elections. He has organized multiple tribal gatherings in the past year, including sheikhs from several of the aforementioned provinces, which indicates that he at least has the contact base to make a strong attempt. End comment.
CROCKER